

6/20/97
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Honorable Daniel P. Moynihan
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510-3201

Dear Senator Moynihan,

One of my most important customers is the Oneida Indian Nation, the owner and operator of Turning Stone Casino. My business relationship with the Oneida Nation, however, will be seriously jeopardized if Congress adopts Representative Solomon's proposed tax on Indian gaming (H.R. #325) or similar proposals to tax Indian Nations currently under consideration in Washington.

Central New York, as you are aware, has been in a perpetual state of economic stagnation for years. Unemployment rates are consistently higher than the national average. Further, our community was hit especially hard a couple of years ago when the Federal Government chose to close Griffiss Air Force Base. Just recently, US Airways decided to shut down its reservation facility in Oneida, New York, resulting in the loss of another 300 jobs.

The Oneida Nation, by contrast, has been one of the few bright spots on our economic horizon. This fall, the Nation will open a new hotel, creating 400 new jobs. Indeed, the Nation is now the second largest private employer in the community. It operates multiple commercial enterprises that employ about 2,700 people - 85% of whom are non-Indian. The profits from those enterprises are reinvested in the community and are earmarked for programs for the Oneida people - individuals who would otherwise place demands on the social services of New York and the Federal Government.

If the United States chooses to tax the Oneida Nation and take away one-third of its revenues, it will greatly impair economic growth and development in Central New York. Those revenues, once they are confiscated by Washington, will not find their way back to New York. More importantly, the Oneida Nation will be forced to curtail its operations and plans for future growth. This will hurt my business along with the business of more than 1,000 other vendors who provide goods and services to the Nation.


I understand the challenge our country faces in finding the path to fiscal responsibility. But there is no need to balance the budget on the backs of some of the poorest members of our society - people who our country has mistreated and exploited for more than two hundred years.

As a representative from this state, you know that Central New York needs all the help it can get. We are not asking for a subsidy or a handout; we simply ask that you do not make the task of rebuilding our economy more difficult by passing a new

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tax that will jeopardize our plans and hopes for the future. Please oppose all efforts to tax Indian Nations and please share your views with your colleagues. Thank you.

Signed,



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